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DEPT ALSO FOR PM/WRA, EUR/UMB, EUR/PRA

E.O. 12958: DECL: 08/03/2016

TAGS: MARR MOPS PREL PARM NATO PINR US UP

SUBJECT: UKRAINE: FOLLOW UP ON MANPADS COUNTERMEASURES

REF: A. KIEV 2886

- 1B. KIEV 1185 (NOTAL)
- 1C. STATE 46155 (NOTAL)
- 1D. KIEV 757 (NOTAL)
- 1E. STATE 24376 (NOTAL)
- 1F. 05 KIEV 4701 (NOTAL)
- 1G. 05 KIEV 3897 (NOTAL)

Classified By: Political Counselor Kent Logsdon for reasons 1.4(b,c,d)

11. (U) This is an action request. See para 6

12. (S) We met August 1 with Defense Minister First Assistant Oleksiy Melnyk regarding next steps on MANPADS countermeasures development, as agreed during our July 14 meeting with Melnyk and other Ukrainian officials (ref A). Melnyk said he had reported to Defense Minister Hrytsenko as promised and was in the process of preparing a report to the Cabinet of Ministers. Preparation of the report was taking time, however, as the determination regarding the number and type of MANPADS excess to Ukraine's defense and military needs was a complicated issue. MOD experts were basing their estimates on projected expenditures for training and operational needs over a six-year period, to 2011. The report would also assess the potential market for legitimate sales of MANPADS, but, Melnyk noted, international arms control regimes severely restricted the quantity that could be potentially sold.

13. (S) Melnyk said the report to Cabinet would detail the number of MANPADS on hand that were excess to Ukrainian defense needs, then advise that the excess could be sold, destroyed, or transferred for USG use. Since a transfer to the USG would save on destruction costs, Melnyk thought the Cabinet would readily agree to a transfer. He advised that an initial assessment suggested that, while the Ukrainian government could have 2000 MANPADS available in excess of its needs, the mix of MANPADS models might not be what PM/WRA Deputy Director Steve Costner had requested. In particular, the newer MANPADS models were more likely to be in the Ukrainian military's active inventory. We assured Melnyk that the request was a target quantity, and that the USG would be able to utilize whatever was offered.

14. (S) Melnyk inquired whether any U.S. agency had been in contact with UKRSPETSEXPORT to initiate discussions on such a transfer. We noted that, per his earlier request, we had taken no further steps pending his report to the Defense Minister. While we could indeed contact UKRSPETSEXPORT, we suggested that the most appropriate next step might be a government-to-government communication in the form of a

letter from a USG official to Defense Minister Hrytsenko. The letter could briefly recapitulate the U.S. side's presentation during the July 14 meeting, i.e., explain why the USG needed MANPADS, state the quantity required, and request GOU cooperation in providing MANPADS. Melnyk readily agreed to the approach and asked that the letter also include two additional elements. The letter should state the USG's continuing support for the NATO PfP Trust Fund project regardless of the outcome of MANPADS countermeasures discussions and describe the USG's offer to provide additional funding for munitions destruction if additional MANPADS were provided for destruction. Melnyk also asked that we not report on the conversation until he had a chance to brief the Defense Minister.

¶5. (S) We recontacted Melnyk August 3. Melnyk said Defense Minister Hrytsenko had agreed that an initial government-to-government communication was the best approach and that we should prepare a letter.

¶6. (U) Action Request. Department's guidance is requested as to whether we can provide the letter requested by Melnyk, and if so, to provide a letter as described in para 4 above.

¶7. (U) Visit Embassy Kiev's classified website:
www.state.sgov.gov/p/eur/kiev.
Taylor